

by another better still. They thought well of it; they thought well of themselves; they were all the more successful in consequence. Certainly they were much happier. 'Edgeworth', said a contemporary, 'must write, or he would burst.' Edgeworth did not burst. 'Her conversation', wrote Byron after meeting his daughter Maria, 'was as quiet as herself; no one would have guessed she could write her name. Whereas her father talked, not as if he could write nothing else, but as if he thought nothing else was worth writing/ The Richard Edgeworths, if not their hearers, are happy after their fashion. Similarly Dr. Beddoes had bounded about with tireless zest and an undivided soul from bleaching negroes to blackening Mr. Pitt. Like Browning he had been one that 'marched breast forward'. True, it is not easy to march in any other way—a point which Browning seems not to have quite considered; but at all events Dr. Beddoes marched; and discovered on the road many odd, and some useful, things. But when we turn to his son, the author of *Death's Jest-Book*, the contrast is complete. In every apple of his Tree of Knowledge lay a little black wriggling worm of doubt. Outstanding as an anatomist, dazzling as a poet, he yet perished by his own hand at forty-five, bequeathing to Dr. Ecklin a stomach-pump and to the world only a wild heap of poetic fragments, blood and

sawdust mixed with diamonds.

Left fatherless in his sixth year, the boy
was sent at
fourteen to Charterhouse. Long afterwards,
when Bed-
does was dead, his friend Kelsall extracted
strange tales of
his doings there from a certain C. D. Sevan
who had been
his fag. Two of these details have been
repeated by Sir
Edmund Gosse and Lytton Strachey—the
boy's habit of
declaiming speeches from Elizabethan drama
at the litde
Bevan (who was forcibly enlisted as
accomplice, enemy,